



HEATH

Franklin County



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NARRATIVE

Narrative

Heath is a Massachusetts hill town midway between the Connecticut River and the New York state line, along the Vermont Border. From any direction it is a climb to reach Heath's town center, which consists of the Heath Union Church, the Community Center, some town offices in the old Grange building, the library and the post office. Also on the windswept common are the old general store, which now serves as a home, the 1834 Town Hall and the 1844 one-room schoolhouse, both traditional white clapboard New England style buildings, and a large colonial house and barn.

A mile to the north and higher on the hill are the Heath Fairgrounds. In mid-August each year, one of the last old time country fairs occurs here. Farmer owners with teams of oxen or draft horses strive mightily to pull the greatest weight. In the Exhibit Hall local cooks, gardeners and artisans compete for prizes.

Vistas open from many spots in Heath; west to Greylock, north to the Green Mountains of Vermont, northeast to Monadnock, south to the Mount Holyoke Range. In what was once a farm community, few family farms remain. The beauty of Heath's setting has attracted summer residents looking for country living in an attractive location. Among them have been several new "Heathens" who were prominent clergy, most famous being Reinhold Niebuhr, who first coined his serenity prayer in the Heath Union Church. Many who summer here are so taken with its charm that they retire to Heath; others are local craftsmen and those who want to make their homes in Heath despite the rigorous commute.

(Narrative supplied by community)



GEOGRAPHY

Location

Northwestern Massachusetts, bordered by Halifax, Vermont, on the north; Colrain on the east; Charlemont on the south and southwest; and Rowe on the west. Heath is 25 miles west of Greenfield, 47 miles northeast of Pittsfield, and 120 miles northwest of Boston.

Total Area: 24.93 sq. miles

Land Area: 24.91 sq. miles

Population: 716

Density: 29 per sq. mile

Climate

(National Climatic Data Center)

(Cummington Hill Station)

Normal temperature in January.....19.9°F

Normal temperature in July.....67.3°F

Normal annual precipitation.....46.0"

U.S.G.S. Topographical Plates

Heath

Regional Planning Agency

Franklin County

Metropolitan Statistical Area

(1993 Definition)



GOVERNMENT

Municipal Offices

Main Number: (413) 337-4934

[Telephone Numbers for Public Information](#)

Form of Government

Board of Selectmen

Administrative Assistant

Open Town Meeting

Year Incorporated

As a town: 1785

Registered Voters (Secretary of State 1994)

	Number	%	
Total Registered	420		
Democrats	88	21.0	%
Republicans	49	11.7	%
Other parties	0	0.0	%
Unenrolled Voters	283	67.4	%

Legislators

[Senators and Representatives by City and Town](#)



DEMOGRAPHICS

Table DP-1. Profile of General Demographic Characteristics: 2000

Geographic Area: Heath town, Franklin County, Massachusetts

[For information on confidentiality protection, nonsampling error, and definitions, see text]

Subject	Number	Percent	Subject	Number	Percent
Total population.....	805	100.0	HISPANIC OR LATINO AND RACE		
SEX AND AGE			Total population.....	805	100.0
Male.....	405	50.3	Hispanic or Latino (of any race).....	5	0.6
Female.....	400	49.7	Mexican.....	-	-
Under 5 years.....	42	5.2	Puerto Rican.....	3	0.4
5 to 9 years.....	58	7.2	Cuban.....	-	-
10 to 14 years.....	78	9.7	Other Hispanic or Latino.....	2	0.2
15 to 19 years.....	71	8.8	Not Hispanic or Latino.....	800	99.4
20 to 24 years.....	24	3.0	White alone.....	785	97.5
25 to 34 years.....	77	9.6	RELATIONSHIP		
35 to 44 years.....	134	16.6	Total population.....	805	100.0
45 to 54 years.....	152	18.9	In households.....	805	100.0
55 to 59 years.....	51	6.3	Householder.....	292	36.3
60 to 64 years.....	35	4.3	Spouse.....	183	22.7
65 to 74 years.....	55	6.8	Child.....	253	31.4
75 to 84 years.....	24	3.0	Own child under 18 years.....	198	24.6
85 years and over.....	4	0.5	Other relatives.....	30	3.7
Median age (years).....	39.3	(X)	Under 18 years.....	21	2.6
18 years and over.....	574	71.3	Nonrelatives.....	47	5.8
Male.....	290	36.0	Unmarried partner.....	20	2.5
Female.....	284	35.3	In group quarters.....	-	-
21 years and over.....	549	68.2	Institutionalized population.....	-	-
62 years and over.....	102	12.7	Noninstitutionalized population.....	-	-
65 years and over.....	83	10.3	HOUSEHOLD BY TYPE		
Male.....	41	5.1	Total households.....	292	100.0
Female.....	42	5.2	Family households (families).....	213	72.9
RACE			With own children under 18 years.....	103	35.3
One race.....	794	98.6	Married-couple family.....	183	62.7
White.....	787	97.8	With own children under 18 years.....	85	29.1
Black or African American.....	-	-	Female householder, no husband present.....	16	5.5
American Indian and Alaska Native.....	-	-	With own children under 18 years.....	12	4.1
Asian.....	4	0.5	Nonfamily households.....	79	27.1
Asian Indian.....	-	-	Householder living alone.....	58	19.9
Chinese.....	-	-	Householder 65 years and over.....	20	6.8
Filipino.....	-	-	Households with individuals under 18 years.....	118	40.4
Japanese.....	4	0.5	Households with individuals 65 years and over.....	54	18.5
Korean.....	-	-	Average household size.....	2.76	(X)
Vietnamese.....	-	-	Average family size.....	3.19	(X)
Other Asian ¹	-	-	HOUSING OCCUPANCY		
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander.....	-	-	Total housing units.....	648	100.0
Native Hawaiian.....	-	-	Occupied housing units.....	292	45.1
Guamanian or Chamorro.....	-	-	Vacant housing units.....	356	54.9
Samoan.....	-	-	For seasonal, recreational, or		
Other Pacific Islander ²	-	-	occasional use.....	232	35.8
Some other race.....	3	0.4	Homeowner vacancy rate (percent).....	3.8	(X)
Two or more races.....	11	1.4	Rental vacancy rate (percent).....	-	(X)
Race alone or in combination with one			HOUSING TENURE		
or more other races: ³			Occupied housing units.....	292	100.0
White.....	798	99.1	Owner-occupied housing units.....	251	86.0
Black or African American.....	1	0.1	Renter-occupied housing units.....	41	14.0
American Indian and Alaska Native.....	8	1.0	Average household size of owner-occupied units.....	2.79	(X)
Asian.....	6	0.7	Average household size of renter-occupied units.....	2.54	(X)
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander.....	-	-			
Some other race.....	3	0.4			

- Represents zero or rounds to zero. (X) Not applicable.

¹ Other Asian alone, or two or more Asian categories.

² Other Pacific Islander alone, or two or more Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander categories.

³ In combination with one or more of the other races listed. The six numbers may add to more than the total population and the six percentages may add to more than 100 percent because individuals may report more than one race.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2000.



HOUSING CHARACTERISTICS

Home Sales (Banker & Tradesman) -

[Town Stats - Free market Statistics](#)

Subsidized Housing Units (DHCD 1998)

[DHCD Subsidized Housing Inventory](#)

Subsidized Housing Units: The number of housing units which count toward the municipality's 10% goal for low- and moderate-income housing. It includes both subsidized affordable units and market rate units in certain eligible subsidized developments.

Public Housing Units (DHCD 1999)

Conventional State:	0
Conventional Federal:	0

Rental Assistance(DHCD 1999)

State (MRVP:	0
Federal (Section 8):	0



TRANSPORTATION

TRANSPORTATION AND ACCESS

The major axes of transportation in Franklin County, where Heath is located, are State Route 2 and Interstate Route 91, which follows the Connecticut River. The region is well-served by rail. The Springfield Terminal Railway lines (the former Boston and Maine Railroad) parallel the two major highways, and the Central Vermont Railway's main line passes N-S through the eastern portion of the county.

Major Highways

The principal highway is State Route 8A running N-S, which intersects cross-state Route 2 in neighboring Charlemont.

Rail

There is no passenger or freight rail service in Heath, but the network of intermodal facilities serving Massachusetts is easily accessible.

Bus

Heath is a member of the Franklin Regional Transit Authority (FRTA). There is no fixed route service, but FRTA provides paratransit services for the elderly and disabled through the Shelburne Council on Aging.

Other

Harriman & West Airport, a General Aviation (GA) facility located 3 mi. W of North Adams, has a 4,300'x 100' asphalt runway. Instrument approaches available: None.



CULTURE AND RECREATION

LIBRARIES

[Board of Library Commissioners On-line Library Catalog](#)

MUSEUMS

(American Association of Museums)

None

RECREATION

[Telephone Numbers for Public Information](#)

Recreational Facilities (Recreational sites and activities)

[Department of Environmental Management Recreation Section](#)



MISCELLANEOUS

HEALTH FACILITIES

(Dept. of Public Health 1992)

Hospitals

None

Long Term Care

None

Hospices

None

Rest Homes

None

UTILITIES

[Telephone Numbers for Public Utilities](#)

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NOTE: The COMMUNITY PROFILE draws information from a diversity of sources. The main source of information is listed under each section. In some instances comments submitted by the municipality were incorporated to correct and/or enhance the information obtained from the main source. However, no changes were made to those data bases which must be consistent throughout the state. DHCD has made efforts to ensure the accuracy of all data in the COMMUNITY PROFILES, but cannot take responsibility for any consequences arising from the use of the information contained in this document.